

From: Drew Wright
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 4:08pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am writing to register my objection to the proposed Microsoft settlement. I do not believe the current proposal serves the interests of promoting competition or remedying the impact on the American consumer.

Specifically, I believe the current proposal will stifle competition by giving Microsoft a leg-up on competitors under the guise of a settlement. Permitting Microsoft to settle the matter by delivering Microsoft products to school systems, which traditionally tend to favor other vendors (e.g., Apple), would be tantamount to state-sponsorship of the extension of Microsoft's monopoly.

Instead, Microsoft should be required to make payment in cash, and then permit the school systems to direct the use of these funds in the (hopefully technical) areas of its choosing.

Furthermore, I believe the amount of the settlement is grossly inadequate to remove the incentive for Microsoft to continue its practices. I believe Microsoft will treat the settlement as a "cost of doing business", much as any other "administrative overhead".

Finally, I believe the settlement should include requirements for Microsoft to provide open access to interfaces between its products, and to provide an unbundled version of Windows (no Internet Explorer, no Windows Media Player, etc.). These actions are needed to afford competitive products, including open source alternatives, with an environment in which they can compete on a level playing field with a competitor which controls the incumbent desktop operating system technology. Without true, timely and open access to interoperability information, the barriers of entry for alternative commercial and open source products will be too high to overcome the leverage held through its desktop operating system monopoly. To truly avoid a recurrence of past practices, an oversight committee of some sort is truly needed.

Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely

Andrew ("Drew") Wright

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